



Participating in Presidential Caucuses and Establishing a Political Party

☒ Presidential Preference Caucuses Authorized in North Dakota

Recognizing the interest and need to be involved in the presidential selection process early in the year, North Dakota's political parties are allowed to conduct presidential preference caucuses. The law states that on one specific day, following the presidential nominating contests in the states of Iowa and New Hampshire and prior to the first Wednesday in March in every presidential election year, every political party established according to Section 16.1-11-30 may conduct a presidential preference caucus.

Before August 15 of the odd-numbered year immediately preceding the presidential election year, the Secretary of State shall designate the day of the presidential preference caucus.

A political party entitled to conduct a presidential preference caucus must notify the Secretary of State before September 1 of the odd-numbered year immediately preceding the presidential election year if the political party will conduct a presidential preference caucus.

A political party that establishes itself according to section 16.1-11-30 after the September 1 deadline and before the day designated by the Secretary of State is entitled to conduct a presidential preference caucus on the day designated by the Secretary of State and shall notify the Secretary of State of the party's intent to conduct a presidential preference caucus at the time it establishes itself.

Therefore, the office of President of the United States will not be included on the June Primary ballot. A presidential candidate wishing to participate in North Dakota's presidential nominating process will have to participate in his or her political party's preference caucus or convention if the party chooses not to conduct a caucus.

☒ Presidential Preference Caucuses

A presidential preference caucus must be conducted in the manner provided in section 16.1-03-20 of the North Dakota Century Code with the exception that a political party does not have to hold presidential preference caucuses in each organized precinct. Established political parties may hold caucuses at the district, regional, or state levels, or a combination thereof. The results of an established political party's presidential preference caucus must be used when determining delegate selection to the party's national convention unless the national party rules provide otherwise. NDCC §16.1-03-20

It is important to recognize that while North Dakota law does provide for a loose framework for organizing and conducting political party activities, a majority of their activities are governed by internal political party rules. These internal rules will govern all aspects of North Dakota's presidential preference caucuses that are not already specified by North Dakota law.

Nothing prevents an established political party, either at the state or district levels, from adopting additional rules or modes of procedure, that are not in conflict with state law, to ensure that only qualified electors who are affiliated with the party participate in a precinct caucus.

For additional information about how North Dakota's presidential preference caucuses will be conducted or how to participate as a candidate, contact North Dakota's established political parties. They include:

North Dakota Republican Party
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Chairman
PO Box 1917
Bismarck, ND 58502
(701) 255-0030
ndgop@btigate.com
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North Dakota Democratic-NPL Party
David Strauss
Chairman
1902 E. Divide Ave.
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(701) 255-0460
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☒ Options for other National Parties

Only North Dakota's political parties, established according to Section 16.1-11-30 of the North Dakota Century Code, are authorized to conduct presidential preference caucuses.

However, other national parties may endorse a presidential candidate for inclusion on the General Election Ballot. To do so, the party must establish itself and gain ballot access by the sixtieth day prior to the Primary Election.

A party that has failed to establish itself and gain ballot access by the deadline, may still nominate a presidential candidate for inclusion on the General Election ballot. The name of the nominee for president of the United States may appear on the ballot with a designation, not to exceed five words, that names the organization or political party to which the presidential candidate affiliates. The designation may not:

- falsely indicate an affiliation with or the support of any political party organized in accordance with this title
- include any substantive word or phrase that is profane
- include or resemble the name of a political party entitled to a separate column on the ballot.

NDCC §16.1-11-30 and Ch. 16.1-12

☒ Establishing a Political Party in North Dakota

A party wishing to be represented on North Dakota's primary and general election ballots must establish itself according to Section 16.1-11-30 of the North Dakota Century Code.

Establishing a political party may be accomplished in three ways according to Section 16.1-11-30 of the North Dakota Century Code. The options include:

1. Casting ballots at the previous presidential election for either President of the United States or Governor equaling 5 percent of the total votes cast for either of those offices;
2. Casting ballots at the previous non-presidential election for either Secretary of State or Attorney General equaling 5 percent of the total votes cast for either of those offices;
3. Being organized throughout the state according to the political party organization requirements found in Chapter 16.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code;
4. Collecting the signatures of 7,000 qualified electors requesting the political party to be recognized and provided a column on North Dakota's primary election ballot. NDCC § 16.1-11-30

A Complete Filing Must Include

1. A **Petition to Establish a Political Party (SFN 17700)** containing the signatures of 7,000 qualified North Dakota electors;
2. The political party's platform principles and a request that the party is included on the state's primary election ballot.

When and Where to File

A political party wishing to establish itself in time to endorse and nominate candidates for inclusion on North Dakota's primary and general election ballots must do so according to the above options by 4 p.m. on the 60th day before the Primary Election. Complete filings must be in the physical possession of the Secretary of State by the filing deadline.